

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Community Asset Transfer (CAT) via grant of lease in land at Ashley Farm Grafton and Newton Farm to Southside Project CIC
Date of decision:	15 June 2022
Decision maker:	Acting Head of Property (now Strategic Assets Delivery Director)
Authority for delegated decision:	The Economy and Place Directorate's scheme of delegation dated 23 December 2021 (line 54) gives the Strategic Assets Delivery Director (previously Acting Head of Property) the authority to take the decision
Ward:	Newton Farm and Wormside
Consultation:	With Cabinet Member Commissioning, Procurement & Assets and Ward Members who are supportive of the proposal to grant a lease to the Southside Project CIC
Decision made:	Approve grant of lease of land at Ashley Farm and Newton Farm to Southside Project CIC under the council's CAT policy
Reasons for decision:	<p>The land at Ashley Farm and Newton Farm is owned by the Council and comprises a block of agricultural land currently let under grazing licences and a sports ground leased to Belmont Wanderers Football Club who are part of the Southside Project group and have agreed to surrender their existing lease.</p> <p>The Southside Project Group (comprising NMITE the new Hereford University, Belmont Wanderers FC and Grow Local CIC who encourage and educate communities to grow and eat local food) have been identified as a recipient of Stronger Towns funding which forms part of the Governments' levelling up agenda to deliver community facilities to enhance the well-being of local residents.</p> <p>In line with the council's CAT policy the Southside Project members have submitted reasoned and detailed business cases demonstrating the community/sporting/educational value they can deliver as a result of the grant of the lease and that they have financial resource at their disposal to take on responsibility for the property and deliver the identified outputs.</p> <p>The business cases have been evaluated by a panel of officers from across the council and has recommended that the grant of the lease is progressed</p> <p>The following terms have been agreed-</p> <p>The rent to be discounted in line with the independent valuation advice received to reflect the social and community value the project will deliver The lease to be for a term of 35 years with provision for rent review The tenant will be responsible for all repairs, maintenance, compliance with statute and all outgoings in respect of the property The use will be restricted to community, sporting and educational purposes The lease will be subject to confirmation that Stronger Towns funding has been approved and that all necessary planning and other statutory consents have been sought and obtained</p>

Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	The lease will be drafted by the Council's legal team and will contain appropriate provisions to safeguard the council's reversionary freehold interest in the land
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	The land could continue to be let on short term grazing licences and leased to Belmont Wanderers FC but the Stronger Town's funding would be lost and the community, sporting and educational benefits arising from the project would not be realised
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed
Acting Head of Property /Delivery Director Property Services

Date: 15 June 2022